

NOTES ON LUCRETII

1.290-4

sic igitur debent venti quoque flamina ferri,
 quae veluti validum cum flumen procubuere
 quamlibet in partem, trudent res ante ruuntque
 impetibus crebris, interdum vertice torto
 corripiunt rapidique rotanti turbine portant.

294 rapidique *O, Q corr.*, *G*: rapidisque *Q*: rapidoque 'ex codicibus fidelioribus' (*Pius*): rapideque *Lachmann* rotanti *OQG*: rotantia *Lambinus*

In 294 most modern scholars either accept *rapidique* or adopt *Lachmann's rapideque*. An exception is *Romanes*,¹ who oddly favours *rapidisque*, which he takes with *impetibus crebris*, placing a comma after *corripiunt*. If *rapidique* is read, one has to assume that Lucretius is writing as though *venti*, not *flamina*, were the subject. There are parallels for this kind of grammatical irregularity (e.g. 1.190, 352, if the text is sound), but there is no need to assume an irregularity here, for, as E. J. Kenney has pointed out to me,² the right reading is almost certainly *rapidoque*. *rapidoque* was favoured by *Lambinus*, but did not originate with him. He notes 'ex libris scriptis alii habent, rapidoque rotanti, alii rapidique rotanti', and *Pius* (1511) knew *rapidoque*, which is printed in the ed. *Juntina* (1512).³ *rapido ... turbine* is strongly supported by 1.273 *rapido ... turbine* and 6.668 *rapidus ... turbo*, also by *subito ... turbine* in 1.279, a line which, as we shall see, is to be closely compared with 1.294.

Why has *rapidoque* not been favoured by modern scholars? Perhaps, as Kenney suggests, because 'the qualification of a single noun by two epithets is felt to be an inappropriately archaic mode of expression'. However, in his editions of 1563-4 and 1565 *Lambinus* reads *rapidoque rotantia*, *rotantia* being his own conjecture. In his definitive edition of 1570 he prints *rapidoque rotanti*, but notes, in reference to his earlier reading, 'neque tamen lectionem illam damno: quin omnibus anteponerem, si antiquorum librorum auctoritate niteretur. sic enim fere locutus est supra, Verrunt, ac subito vexantia turbine raptant'. The line quoted by *Lambinus* is 1.279. It is indeed very similar to 294, and it lends powerful support to *Lambinus's* earlier reading there: as I have said, *subito ... turbine* in 279 favours *rapido ... turbine* in 294; and *vexantia* in 279 points to *rotantia* in 294. It is to be noted too that, with *rapidoque rotantia*, 294, like 279, has a rhythm which admirably reflects and reinforces the sense, whereas *rotanti*, giving a diaeresis after a fourth-foot spondee, obstructs the sweeping movement of the line. Why should Lucretius have spoiled the effect with *rotanti* when he could so easily have written *rotantia*?⁴

For the corruption *rotanti* for *rotantia*, cf. e.g. 2.337 *pari* *O* for *paria*; 3.32 *quali* *Q* for *qualia*; 6.4 *solaci* *OQ* for *solacia*; perhaps 1.491 *ferventi* *OQG* for *ferventia* *Marullus*. As for *rapidi-* for *rapido-*, cf. e.g. 1.400 *commemorandi* *O* for *commemorando*.

¹ N. H. *Romanes*, *Further Notes on Lucretius* (Oxford, 1935), p. 8.

² In an unpublished note, of which he has kindly allowed me to make use. Both he and Professor M. D. Reeve have read the present article and made valuable comments on it. I am very grateful to both of them; also to Professor M. L. Clarke for his discussion of 4.418-19.

³ The ed. *Juntina* reads *rapidoque rotantes*.

⁴ It is worth noting also that Virgil has *rotantia* (used intransitively) in a similar context: *at parte ex alia, qua saxa rotantia alte | impulerat torrens arbustaque diruta ripis, ...* (*Aen.* 10.361-2). I am indebted to *CQ's* anonymous reader for bringing this point to my attention.

1.384–6

postremo duo de concursu corpora lata
 si cita dissiliant, nempe aer omne necessest,
 inter corpora quod fiat, possidat inane.

D. R. Shackleton Bailey⁵ proposes *late* for *lata* in 384. The alteration much improves the sense: 'Lastly, if two bodies set in motion leap far apart after contact, ...' However, Shackleton Bailey is not, as he apparently supposes, the first to have put the text right. Havercamp⁶ notes: 'Forte, (ut etiam in quodam MSS. est) legere praestat *late*'. Under 'Variae Lectiones' he reports that he found *late* written in a copy of the ed. Veronensis of 1486. Merrill⁷ notes that *late* is the reading of Cod. Vat. Ottob. Lat. 1954 and occurs as a variant in Cod. Vat. Lat. 3275.

4.414–9

at conlectus aquae digitum non altior unum,
 qui lapides inter sistit per strata viarum, 415
 despectum praebet sub terras impete tanto,
 a terris quantum caeli patet altus hiatus,
 nubila despicere et caelum ut videre videre
 corpora mirande sub terras abdita caelo.

418 caelum ut *O*: caelum *Q* 419 mirande *O* (cf. 4.462): mirandae *Q*: mirando *F*: (mirandum) *Bentley* caelo *OQ*: pacto *Faber* (who reads mirando): retro *Bentley*

In my Loeb editions of 1975 and 1982 I printed the above text in 418–19, following C. L. Howard⁸ in placing a comma after *videre*. However, the asyndeton *despicere ... videre* is awkward: as Godwin⁹ points out, in an unpunctuated text, which is probably what the Roman reader would have had, *videre videre* would naturally be taken together.¹⁰

Numerous emendations of 418–19 have been proposed, and it is by no means agreed which word or words require alteration. Many editors follow Goebel and Bergk in reading *caeli* for *caelum* in 418, some of them, like Bergk, retaining *corpora* in 419, others adopting Polle's *caerula*.¹¹ *caelo* in 419 has been suspected by some – rightly in my view (see below). Curiously, *videre* has escaped suspicion, although Lambinus in his first edition (1563–4)¹² proposes *videre et* – a proposal accepted by Bailey¹³ and Godwin,¹⁴ but unlikely to be correct because Lucretius does not

⁵ *Phoenix* 39 (1985), 27.

⁶ S. Havercamp, *T. Lucretii Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex* (Leiden, 1725), i.109. He does not adopt *late*.

⁷ W. A. Merrill, 'The Italian Manuscripts of Lucretius. Part II: Variant Readings', *University of California Publications in Classical Philology* 9 (1926), 59.

⁸ *CPh* 56 (1961), 153–4.

⁹ J. Godwin, *Lucretius: De Rerum Natura IV* (Warminster, 1986), p. 118.

¹⁰ Cf. G. B. Townend, 'Punctuation in the Latin Hexameter', *CQ* n.s. 19 (1969), 330–44, especially 338, where he maintains that 'it may be claimed with some confidence that, except where the run of the sentence is absolutely clear, a sense-break before the last word can never be assumed', and that 'nowhere in Lucretius is there a sentence whose meaning is determined by the presence of a comma'.

¹¹ *caeli* and *caerula* would be unusually far separated, but cf. 6.809, where *terrai* and *abdita* are separated by two words.

¹² In his edition of 1570 Lambinus obelizes *et* and 419.

¹³ Bailey, like Merrill and Martin, credits Bernays with the proposal, which is misprinted *videret et* in Martin's critical note.

¹⁴ Op. cit. (see n. 9 above).

elsewhere have *et* at the end of a line. Although *videor videre* is not uncommon,¹⁵ it seems not improbable that *videre* came in by dittography after *videare*, ousting the true reading. I propose *et aperta* for *videre*, and *cernas* for *caelo*:

nubila despicere et caelum ut videare et aperta
corpora mirande sub terras abdita cernas.

so that you seem to look down upon the clouds and the sky and you see manifest bodies miraculously buried beneath the earth.

For *aperta corpora...cernas*, cf. 1.297 *aperto corpore* in contrast with 1.295 *corpora caeca*; 4.596 *res cernere apertas. corpora*, with or without *caeli*, has often been taken to mean 'heavenly bodies', but no parallel can be cited. The word simply means 'bodies', 'objects'.¹⁶ Lucretius is perhaps thinking partly of our bodies, and this may have influenced his use of *corpora* rather than *res*, but no doubt he is thinking of all sorts of other things (e.g. buildings, trees) as well. As for *aperta*, it is a favourite Lucretian word to describe what is 'manifest' or 'clearly seen',¹⁷ and it provides an effective contrast with *abdita*: the miracle (cf. *mirande*) is not only that things above ground, whether in the sky or on earth, are apparently underground, but also that 'clearly visible' objects are 'hidden away'. I suggested above that *et aperta* may have been ejected from the text when *videre* was added by dittography after *videare*. Another possibility is that *videre* was inserted not accidentally, but deliberately, when the scribe found a blot or tear after *videare*. A blot or tear might help to explain why *caelo* was substituted for *cernas* at the end of 419, although straightforward corruption is perfectly possible, especially after *caeli* and *caelum* in 417–18. Certainly *caelo* is unwanted. The repetition of the same word (*caelum*), in three cases, in three consecutive lines, would not necessarily arouse suspicion if the sense were good, but *caelo* does not give good sense: *sub terras*, as the accusative shows, goes with *abdita*, and to say, as many editors and translators would have Lucretius say, 'to look down on the clouds and see the sky...miraculously buried in the earth in the sky' is almost nonsensical.

That *cernas* is the correct replacement for *caelo* cannot, of course, be proved. Of other suggestions, Bentley's *retro* seems to me the best. He compares 1.1058–9 *et quae pondera sunt sub terris omnia sursum | nitier in terraque retro requiescere posta* and 4.607 *ergo replentur loca vocibus abdita retro*.

6.262–8

sic igitur supera nostrum caput esse putandumst
tempestatem altam; neque enim caligine tanta
obruerent terras, nisi inaedificata superne
multa forent multis exempto nubila sole; 265
nec tanto possent venientes opprimere imbri,
flumina abundare ut facerent camposque natare,
si non exstructis foret alte nubibus aether.

266 tanto...imbri OQ: tanti...imbres *Lambinus*

In 266 the reading of the manuscripts presents a serious problem. How is *venientes* to

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. Cic. *Amic.* 41, *Div. Caec.* 45.

¹⁶ Lucretius explains in 1.483–4 that *corpora* are either atoms or compounds. For *corpora* = 'objects', see e.g. 1.384, 867.

¹⁷ Cf. 1.297, 915; 2.182; 4.54, 467, 596, 811; 5.1062.

be taken? It can hardly mean, as Godwin¹⁸ tentatively suggests it might, 'people travelling'. And to assume, as most scholars do, that it agrees with *nubes*, to be understood either 'from 268 *nubibus* in the dependent clause' (Munro) or 'from the general sense of the passage' (Bailey) is unsatisfactory: Lucretius has mentioned clouds in 265, using the neuter *nubila*; moreover, 'nor could clouds come to overwhelm us with so much rain, if the ether did not have clouds high-heaped' would be a somewhat odd thing to say. Something is surely wrong with the text. W. S. Watt¹⁹ suspects that *venientes* is corrupt and proposes *umentes* (sc. *terras* from 264) – a proposal which, though palaeographically plausible, is unnecessary and unconvincing: it is unnecessary because the object of *opprimere* does not need to be expressed here any more than it does in 6.285–6 *displosa repente | opprimere ut caeli videantur templa superne*; and it is unconvincing because Lucretius is still being made to say that clouds could not produce so much rain if there were not masses of clouds.

By far the best solution to the problem is provided by Lambinus in his edition of 1570. He proposes *tanti...imbres*²⁰ for *tanto...imbri*. This puts everything right: *venientes* has a noun with which to agree; and we now have an entirely natural statement: 'nor could such mighty rains come to overwhelm us, so as to make rivers overflow and plains swim, if the ether did not have clouds high-heaped'.

6.970–2

barbigeras oleaster eo iuvat usque capellas,
effluat ambrosiam quasi vero et nectare tinctus;
qua nil est homini quod amariu' fronde ac extet.

qua *OQ*: quo *F*: quom *Ernout* fronde ac extet (exscet *O*) *OQU*: frondeat extet *F*: fronde vigescat *Bailey*: fronde virescat *M. F. Smith*

fronde virescat is suggested by M. L. Clarke²¹ in a recent note in this journal. His suggestion is accepted by Godwin in his new edition of Book 6.²² Neither scholar has noticed that I tentatively proposed the same reading in my Loeb edition of 1982, comparing 1.252. Translate: 'yet there is no green growth which is more bitter to man than this foliage'.²³

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¹⁸ J. Godwin, *Lucretius: De Rerum Natura VI* (Warminster, 1991), p. 114.

¹⁹ *MH* 47 (1990), 126.

²⁰ Martin attributes the suggestion to Bockemüller.

²¹ *CQ* n.s. 41 (1991), 257.

²² See n. 18 above.

²³ It has been suggested to me that *qua* and *fronde* are improbably far separated, but cf. 3.416, where *hoc* and *foedere* are equally far separated.

A NOTE ON AENEID 8.514–517

Evander promises Aeneas two hundred of his Arcadians for the war against the Italians, with as many cavalry under Pallas into the bargain; and puts his son under the Trojan leader's command:

hunc tibi praeterea, spes et solacia nostri,
Pallanta adiungam; sub te tolerare magistro
militiam et graue Martis opus, tua cernere facta
adsuescat, primis et te miretur ab annis. (514–17)

Pallas is an only son and, apparently, one born to a father long past his prime; hence,